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(Ca. 1870) NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
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at the top with yucca-leaf strands. Over them a thatching of bundles of big bluestem grass or bear grass is tied, shingle style, with yucca strings. A smoke hole opens above a central fireplace. A hide, suspended at the entrance, is fixed on a cross-beam so that it may be swung forward or backward. The doorway may face in any direction. For waterproofing, pieces of hide are thrown over the outer thatching, and in rainy weather, if a fire is not needed, even the smoke hole is covered. In warm, dry weather much of the outer roofing is stripped off. It takes approximately three days to erect a sturdy dwelling of this type. These houses are "warm and comfortable, even though there is a big snow."

The interior is lined with brush and grass beds over which robes are spread. Household equipment is utilitarian and minimal. Basketry receptacles include coiled shallow trays, large twined burden baskets for gathering wild foods, and pitch-covered woven water containers. There may be a few clay pots, unpainted and only occasionally incised. There are gourd cups and hide, gourd, and wooden dishes. Surplus food and clothing are stored in undecorated, envelope-like hide receptacles (parfleches). Ready for use are a metate and a cigar-shaped mano (as often as not of ancient Pueblo manufacture), stone and bone pounders, an awl, rawhide or horsetail hair ropes and tumplines, a fire drill, and combs made of dried and folded grass or mescal leaf.

In or around the camp are objects connected with horsemanship—saddles, bridles, bits, quirts, and saddlebags. Conspicuous, too, are weapons of war and chase—the bow and arrows, quiver, bow cover, shield, wrist guard, spear, sling, flint knives, and clubs.

Ceremonial objects—the pottery drum, a deer- or elk-hoof rattle, buckskin bags of pollen and other sacred substances, and the particular paraphernalia attached to the rites of the individuals of the household—are present but are less likely to be displayed.

The dwelling may contain a musical instrument or two not

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To turn it from rawhide to buckskin, the woman uses deer brains. She boils the brain just a little, just steams it, and then works it with her hands. As she works it, she puts warm water with it. Then she puts the hide in and works it until it gets soft. She takes it out and hangs it in the sun to dry a little. Then she wrings it out and starts to pull and stretch it.

She holds one end of it on the ground and stretches it by pulling at the other end. She works it all over and on both sides as it dries. If she starts early in the morning, she gets through about noon with this stretching. Once in a while she stops and lets it dry some more. By the time she is finished, it has turned to buckskin. Deerskin, antelope skin, and elkskin are treated in the same way.

Some women apply deer brains and fat directly to the hide before it is soaked in the water.

In cold weather when the tanned skin is not needed at once, the hide may be rolled up and put aside pending a milder season:

The skin should be made soft in summer. If it is worked in cold weather, you have to keep going and can't stop at any point until it is all finished, or it will not be a smooth job and will show where you started in again. In warm weather, though, it doesn't matter when you work on it. You can just pick it up any time and do as much as you want to on it and then lay it aside and pick it up again.

When thick rawhide is wanted, the method differs:

To get hide for moccasin soles, the woman begins just the same way as she does in making buckskin. She takes the hair off in the same way. But then she just lets the hide dry and uses it. Since it is for moccasin soles, she wants it thick, so she does not stretch it out with pins. If she wants to tan it, she will stretch it out; then it gets thin.

It often becomes necessary to re-work buckskin:

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When you once turn hide to buckskin, you want to be very careful how you handle it. If you get it wet in one place, it's going to be hard there all the time. Then it has to be softened with a rough rock. After a rain, women will take buckskin moccasins or clothes, dry them, and then work them over with a rock. But the buckskin never gets as good as it was before.

If the rawhide bottoms of a pair of big overlapping moccasins wear out, they take off the soles. The uppers are sure to be dirty and hard near the soles. They may be torn where they were sewed. Then they take the moccasins and bury this hard part in damp ground. They sprinkle a little water on top of the ground, just enough to keep it damp. They leave the buckskin in the ground for a half-day or a little more. Then it is damp and soft and can be worked. They do this so that they will be able to stretch it and work it to fit the new bottom. I have seen this done many times.